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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP; NSC FOR E.PHU

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: DCM AND INDONESIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS DISCUSS
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

REF: A. JAKARTA 00085
[1](#)B. JAKARTA 02298 AND PREVIOUS

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[1](#)1. (U) SUMMARY. DCM hosted a third parliamentary outreach working lunch in advance of a January 26-29 legislative reform visit to Washington. The working lunch series was established in response to the Indonesian Parliament's request for expanded cooperation on parliamentary capacity-building. It is particularly important that we support these reform efforts as Indonesia approaches its April 9 legislative elections. These peer-to-peer exchanges are key in strengthening the Parliament's operational effectiveness, and provide a crucial building block for a strategic partnership. END SUMMARY.

DPR'S REFORM EFFORT

[1](#)2. (U) DCM hosted a third working lunch January 22 to discuss parliamentary reforms with Members of Parliament (MPs) and staffers. The working lunch series was established in response to the Indonesian Parliament's (DPR) request for expanded Government of Indonesia (GOI)-USG cooperation on parliamentary capacity building (reftel).

[1](#)3. (U) Parliamentarians and staff attending the lunch were U.S.-Indo Caucus members and participants in GOI-funded research and training trips to the U.S. The U.S. House Democracy Assistance Commission (HDAC), USAID, State, and Library of Congress (LOC) facilitate these substantive missions. A delegation of nine MPs and two staff working on an important legislative reform bill are in the U.S. January 26-29 to learn more about the function and structure of the U.S. legislature.

A NEW AND IMPROVED USG-GOI RELATIONSHIP

[1](#)4. (U) Participants at the lunch discussed the forthcoming U.S. and Indonesian economic stimulus packages. Some expressed economic nationalist sentiments, but all shared a desire to move our relationship forward. The DCM said that Indonesia should open itself up to foreign competition, particularly by sending students of its own abroad and enabling them to compete on the global stage.

[1](#)5. (U) The MPs expressed the hope that President Obama's "respectful" approach to the Muslim world will strengthen our bilateral relationship. They were also pleased that Secretary Clinton recognized Indonesia as a multi-ethnic democracy with global importance.

ON HOW TO COOPERATE

¶6. (U) DCM asked about areas of possible cooperation. The MPs expressed the need for good governance, infrastructure and social reforms. Their specific priorities included:

- Strengthening the regional parliament;
- Improving communication between local and national levels of government;
- And improving the delivery of regional public services.

¶7. USAID noted that the USG cooperates with the GOI on governance capacity building and anticipates continued interaction with the GOI to identify its current priorities for strategic partnership. DCM urged the MPs to approach us with any new ideas.

¶8. (U) Talk also centered on the greatly anticipated possibility that President Obama will come to Indonesia. If he does, they would like to hear him talk about poverty alleviation, education, and the economy. They also asked for more dialogue and more visits from both sides. On improving the relationship through education initiatives, one Member waxed nostalgic about USIS American centers and the books he used to read there. LOC and USAID representatives reminded him of USG's ongoing programs of support to the DPR and Indonesia. Senior MP Marzuki Darusman praised the recently established Global Legal Information Center (GLIN Center) as an access point for the DPR to the Library of Congress (reftel). The other MPs responded that they need to make these initiatives better known to the DPR as a whole.

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY THROUGH PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES

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¶9. (U) As the April 9 legislative elections draw nearer, it is particularly important that we support these reform efforts as a fruitful area of cooperation. These peer-to-peer exchanges are instrumental in helping the DPR develop effective legislation, oversight, and transparency. They are also vital to U.S. interests in effectively promoting democratic institutions long term.

HUME